

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

DIVISION OF ECUMENICAL ACTION

Working Group on Studies

A Study on Contemporary Morality:

Conscientious Living in a World of Change

An Outline

A. THE PROBLEM

1. The necessary information is on every television screen. 80% of the world's population live on 20% of the world's wealth. 20% of the world's population spend 80% of the world's wealth and have to learn to live with planned waste. There is hunger in the world. There is illiteracy in the world. There is mass unemployment in the world. And all this is only a foreshadow of what will come: a world of mass starvation. A civil war world: two, three, five Vietnams. A global upheaval of the have-nots against the haves.

The necessary information is available. But there is no real change, in spite of signs of good will from churches, governments and non-governmental organizations. Why is there no real reaction to the all too real menace of the civil war world? Why is there no radical change of policy on the part of the industrialized countries? Why no change of economic systems? Why no change of international trade structures?

2. It is the hypothesis of this study, either to be verified or to be refuted, that this lack of response to the challenges of our time is a problem of conscience. Man's conscience is still directed towards a small, parochial world: his family, his friends, his social group, his nation at the most. Man knows, more or less, what it means to live responsibly in this parochial world, at least his conscience has been trained for this world. But there is no element of universality in our conscience formation. The world horizon is an unknown horizon in terms of conscience, morality, responsibility. The ordinary man therefore cannot morally integrate information and challenge from this horizon. He does not know how to react and whether to react. And therefore there is little public opinion pressing towards change in view of imminent catastrophies. Governments, consequently, conscious of public opinion as they are, do not consider any long-range adaptation to the world crisis they will inevitably face in ten or twenty years' time. They do not even take much trouble in removing some of the immediate causes of the coming crisis, as the UNCTAD Conference in New Delhi has shown.

The reason: There is comparatively no pressure on them.

...../

3. Contemporary man is living in a planetary world with a parochial conscience. The problem then is how to make conscience contemporary. How do we describe a contemporary morality, a morality for today and especially tomorrow? In the centre of every kind of moral education there is something like a "picture of the good man". What would be a convincing draft of "the good man of today and tomorrow"? And what kind of conscience formation, educational and trans-educational (the telling of stories for instance, of fairy tales has a trans-educational impact), would correspond to this draft of tomorrow's morality? Are there pedagogical concepts and methods applicable to this particular task? The family and compulsory schooling are evidently deeply involved, but what kind of family and what kind of compulsory schooling do we envisage training the planetary conscience, the conscience conscious of mankind's unity? There are other "educators" which have to be thought of: the mass media, the political and economic structures as such and last but not least, the Church. All these "educators" at the moment train a parochial conscience. Why? And even more interesting: how? For moral education is not normally done distinctly by itself. It is inherent in other educational processes, it "happens", almost marginally. How then can one make a moral education (which is planetary and not provincial) "happen", keeping in mind that we are about to leave the planet and that this fact cannot be morally irrelevant?

4. The search for a contemporary morality is under particular pressure. Not only are we facing a world crisis between the have-nots and the haves, we are about to enter a world which will be shaped by human engineering and planning - political, economic, social education, etc. - in a measure and with a precision which has never yet been possible in human history. Man is learning to create his own future, to design it and implement his designs. Man is about to take responsibility for the course of his own history, his own humanization. If that is even halfway true then the problem of a contemporary morality becomes all the more urgent. This morality will have to be geared to the future. It will have to be a "prospective morality" taking moral decisions on the basis of responsible drafts of future developments. Basic moral questions to be asked will be of the following kind:

What will be the consequences of my actions for the coming generation?

What is my range of responsibilities in the light of an emergent world society?

What are my alternatives in the developing future and what are the criteria for my choice?

Have I obtained all the necessary information for my choice?

How do I act in such a way as to keep the future open and full of promise for my fellowmen and myself?

How do I convert the conflicts I am involved in into creative tensions?

What are the educational processes in which I am engaged and how do I open them up to future challenges?

5. The context of a contemporary morality may seem complicated and will certainly become more so in the course of the study. Nevertheless, it should be clear that this must be a study about and hopefully, with ordinary people. Conscience formation mainly happens in homes, compulsory schooling, local churches, youth groups and on the streets. It is done more or less unintentionally, by example rather than instruction. At the moment it forms conscience in a parochial way. It will therefore be necessary to find out with these "teachers of conscience" where and how their teaching is not contemporary. It will be necessary to find out with young people, those adapting and those protesting, what the relevance of their criticism of adult morality and of their own moral experience is. And this will have to be done on a six-continent basis, because the history of morality and therefore its possible development is different in every culture. There will, of course, have to be professional study of certain aspects of the problem, especially of the sociological, psychological and educational aspects. But the worth of the study process and of the possible results will be decided by the communicability of our effort to "ordinary people".

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

B. ALTERNATIVES

There are a number of drafts of the coming world. Futurology is just beginning to become a serious science. But there are elements in today's world which point to the future. We are not relying on dreams. We are taking the reality of our present life seriously by pointing out certain unquestionable alternatives which must determine our moral decisions, our general style of living today.

1. Will there be a world?

The menace, which will build up if the Third World is not assisted by the developed countries, has been described. But there is, closely linked, another menace. Mankind has the means of self-destruction. The big bombs are really only a symbol of this power. There are biological means. There are chemical means. There is the possibility to destroy this world by sheer traditionalism, moral laziness, cowardice, lack of imagination, political immobility, international distrust. There is the dangerous polarization of societies - along ideological, economic, racial, educational and generational lines - which makes them politically unable to move and to change. There is a general tendency to escape from change into some kind of withdrawal ideology: neo-nationalism, familism, hedonism, political and religious fundamentalism. Menace and withdrawal form a vicious circle.

Our problem at this juncture is that the "classical" patterns of social organization, which developed in the 19th century and still determine modern society - the nation-state and the so-called free market - seem to prove insufficient to ban the danger of destruction. The nation-state with its central idea of sovereignty prevents the development of international law and order. The free market, having created affluence in the industrialized countries only by exploitation of the greater part of the world, has finally demonstrated its inefficiency in the first development decade. Even when the industrialized countries make an effort to help with the development of the Third World, they become richer, while the developing countries become poorer. Evidently, a change in political and economic patterns is called for. But established systems, while they are ready to change within their structure, are hardly able and willing to question their very foundations.

That is a sketch of the scenery in which we ask: Will there be a world? It is not at all sure that the answer of history will be affirmative. The decision will be closely connected with our problem of conscientious living. To live conscientiously means to help mankind overcome destruction.

2. A planetary world

Since we have seen our earth from space we begin to develop a planetary consciousness. It has two essential elements. We begin to realize how deparately small our planet is, lost in space and matter. And we begin to feel how inseparably we belong together, the small family of man, crowded together on a small planet, exposed to the universe. We knew these things before; but now we are beginning to feel them.

The forces which draw us together are strong. There is increasing economic interdependence. There is politically a situation in which bargaining must go on because the big war must not begin; a situation where powers ideologically viciously separated still have so many interests in common that they must act jointly, willingly or unwillingly. There are the beginnings of a trans-national political organization. There is a worldwide process of acculturation, enforced by modern industry. There is international tourism, destroying or reinforcing prejudice. There is a huge migration movement, workers and students crossing borders more and more easily. There is, on the whole, a young generation which feels internationally rather than nationally, universally rather than in any separatistic way. In most of the countries of this earth, mainly in the capitals, there is a small but growing international community, which may be a sign of tomorrow.

But there are also forces which tear us apart. They have been mentioned: forces of polarization between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the young and the old. And even if we fight these forces and pursue the vision of the one mankind, the one planetary community, we must remember that we are dreaming an ambiguous dream. The one world, for which we long, what kind of a world will it be? The one family of

man, will it be a family or an anthheap? Do we mean uniformity or constructive diversity? Do we see mankind unified for sheer loss of tension or do we see mankind as an ongoing process of mutual enrichment full of creative conflict and cross-fertilization? Do we envisage one world culture in which our present cultural identities are wiped out or do we fight for pluralism with all the strength we have?

These seem to be rhetorical questions. They are not. If it is cultural identity, if it is pluralism we want for tomorrow's world, it must be pluralism we fight for today. The Christians are far from taking this fight seriously.

3. A world free from war

Even now the big wars cannot be waged and the small wars cannot be won. All the traditional means for the solution of political and social conflicts have become useless: war, political annexation, oppression, isolation or self-isolation, all kinds of social warfare like apartheid etc. There is a tendency today to hail revolution and civil war, and there is certainly enough reason for revolution in many parts of the world. But even revolution has to be seen in an international context, it carries the risk of international war and it is therefore a two-edged weapon. The old means of conflict solution are still used all over the world. But their ineffectiveness is evident.

Thus, there is a real chance that this world will definitely get rid of war and violent conflict solution simply because these means have become too dangerous. Christians have been pushing towards that end for many centuries now although they have often been their own worst enemies.

But now, with the possible abolition of war, mankind is facing a new problem. Conflict is still the condition of life and human growth. A world without conflict would be a dead world, and an uncreative world, a world without history, development, humanness. How to preserve conflict without its violent solutions? How to preserve competition, the struggle for power? How to make use of aggression and bar its negative consequences? How to save the virtues of war - bravery, comradeship, the idea of unlimited service, self-sacrifice - in a world without weapons? We cannot live without tension. But we must live without its militant expressions. What, then, are the peaceful expressions of tension? What are its constructive solutions? How to teach conscience that conflict is good, violence is bad?

4. A world free from want

Food is the oldest problem of mankind. The world to come may solve it definitively. Even now hunger and need have almost disappeared in the affluent countries. In spite of some

pessimistic estimates of the ratio between growth of food and growth of population, mankind has all the means to banish hunger now by a combination of population control, resettlement programs, agricultural improvements and the development of artificial food. It is "only" the political and economic structures and the cultural traditions which make hunger insurmountable - now.

But eventually the problem of food will be solved. Strangely enough even that will create new difficulties. The struggle for survival, for food has been one of the strongest incentives of human progress. Consequently moral concepts like work and achievement have been basic values in most human moralities, although nowhere have they been so almost deified as in the Protestant countries. What if leisure begins to take more of man's time than work? What if men begin to get paid for not working? What if work becomes the privilege of the highly educated? These are not absurd questions. The problems are real. Already there are areas in industry where the work of machines is so much cheaper than manpower that mass unemployment can only be avoided by state subsidy. In agriculture it is even worse, though for different reasons. Only by subsidy and food destruction can many farmers be kept in work.

Work will not be the most important content of life as it has been through all human history. In fact, for many people there may be no paid work at all. How will human beings live without work? Is there enough creativity in them, in all of them, to make a life spent in human relations, in reading, painting, study, in dialogue, in sports and travel, in politics and other services to the community, worth living? Or will there be a "proletariat of time", people who have nothing except time, and time more than they can spend? It is evident that an entirely different kind of education will be necessary if the "leisure man" is going to survive in a human way. Entirely different values will have to be taught before we know that reading is really more important than working for our daily bread. And the time for this kind of education is now! The children who grow up today may see a world in which there is no work for them, at least no permanent work, by which to fulfill life.

5. A fully secularized world

The process of secularization, now in full force, will go on. That means, traditions will go on breaking down. A way of thinking, of living, of believing is not true any more, just because it is old, just because we have received it from our forefathers, just because it represented the way "one" lived, just because it was the way religion sanctified. Man has realized that traditions do not really meet his experience in his modern world. He cannot live as they teach him. He must think new thoughts. He must invent new ways of dealing with the world. He must decide himself, what he believes and how he behaves. There is nothing irreligious in secularization. After

all, traditions are not God-given, they are man-made. Only the world has changed, experiences have changed. Therefore traditions, the sum of past experiences with God, with man and with the world, have to be scrutinized.

This process of man's liberation from tradition has been going on since the Renaissance. It has made room for the secular state, for science and technology. Our century has to go through the secularization of moral traditions. We are faced anew with the problem how man and woman should live together, how parents and children should understand their relationship, how far "nation" can and should bind people who know of the greater mankind, whether there is any virtue in "order" etc.

The process of secularization will go on. This study on morality will in itself share in the work of secularization by probing into old moral traditions and trying to formulate new insights. It is necessary to emphasize that the aim of secularization is not the destruction of tradition but its critical re-evaluation. Tradition is not taken as sacrosanct and unquestionable but as a rich source of information about the life of our forefathers, from which we can learn and which inspires us to our own drafts of the "good life".

It is all the more necessary to point out this ongoing importance of tradition because of the future world which we are trying to envisage. This world will be fully secularized, sooner or later. Tradition-directed life will have vanished. Man will have come of age, forming his own judgments according to his own experiences.

But this is already wishful thinking. A fully secularized world is a very ambiguous notion. Tradition gives profile to people, identity, personality. It provides them with language, homeland, an identifiable past. It gives them roots, in both a negative and a positive way. Will the fully secularized world be a traditionless world? If so, it will be a world of uniformity, indifferentism - a 1984 world. Man who has freed himself from tradition in such a way, will be prey to every manipulation and will not even care, because with tradition it has lost judgment and the possibility of judgment. So the fully liberated man may be the entirely unfree man, in a kind of historical irony. The process of secularization therefore demands that we deal with tradition in a careful, respectful and loving way. We must keep whatever we can, whatever knowledge, whatever wisdom, whatever valid experience we find. Tomorrow's world must be a world of original human beings, ready for the creative dialogue which alone will make this world worth living in.

6. The time is now

Drawing pictures of a future world may seem quite useless and even frivolous. Does not today's world challenge us with too many problems anyway? But that is exactly the point: to-

day's world challenges us to take responsibility for tomorrow's world. We do not play futuristic games. We listen to today's world's agony and we realize that one cannot understand what happens to this world unless one thinks of tomorrow. One cannot overcome the problems of this world unless one thinks of tomorrow, plans for tomorrow, prepares for tomorrow.

The time to decide that the end of this world must not be a big explosion is now. The time to decide whether the planetary world will be an antheap or a human family is now. The time to develop ideas and attitudes of "peace in tension" is now. The time to educate the "leisure man" is now. The time to translate tradition into the language of tomorrow is now.

And now is the time to fight for these visions because the forces which draw us back are at work. We need pluralism, but there is an anti-pluralistic tendency in political propaganda, in the mass media influencing public opinion, advertising shaping our consuming habits, authoritarian education. We need a vision of peace, but we are still left with the negative picture of peace as the absence of war, and war is still the ultimate aim of most of our thinking and planning and producing though we all know it must not happen. We need an educational programme which prepares for leisure but there is still the Protestant preoccupation with work as the ultimate value, and only the most uncreative kinds of free-time occupation are really popular. There is an urgent need to pursue secularization and still keep tradition, but the forces of traditionalism-neo-nationalism, familism (1), political and religious fundamentalism - prevent both. There is a need of people who are in love with tomorrow's world.

C. CONSCIENCE

1. Until we know better, we define conscience as the way the individual interiorizes social norms, so that these norms form the background of his habitual moral life and his specific moral decisions. We do not place too much emphasis on decision, normally connected with the notion of conscience, because the greater part of moral life seems to us to be unreflected repetition of moral patterns, provided for by the process of conscience formation. We consider this habit-forming power of conscience formation an extremely interesting and valuable phenomenon in the context in which we are exploring morality. Violent reactions in conflict are habitual. Could there be a habit of peaceful reactions? There is reason to believe this to be possible. There is for instance a habitual peaceful reaction of an adult against the attacks of a child. The habit-forming element in conscience seems to be much stronger than the decision-forming element. Any search for a new morality must take account of this fact.

2. The most important agency of conscience formation seems to be the family in the years of early childhood. The moral system is present in the stories told, in the judgments expressed, in reward and punishment, in the pictures of life drawn, but especially in the impact of the parents own morality, inherent in their attitude towards the child and other people. This period of conscience formation is especially interesting because it lays foundations. It imposes for instance the sexual role on the child. It impresses on the child, what a boy is like and what a girl is like, thus victimizing the child to age-old prejudices of extreme social relevance. A particular problem of this period are the stories told, including biblical stories. German studies have shown that the receptiveness for anti-semitic propaganda goes back to a particular way of making Jesus the hero in a fight against his Jewish adversaries. But conscience formation goes far beyond early childhood. Primary school is of special importance not so much by the articulate teaching processes but through the experience of a child to be part of a gang and in continuous fight with "the" teacher. Secondary school is judgment-forming, conscience is becoming personal conscience. But in the time of adolescence the peer group may be the most important conscience forming agency. Opportunism and other-directedness are now firmly established. There is a strong influence of mass media, the whole consumer's world and the street, with its multiple impressions on the formation of conscience, too. Religious education is just one influence among others. Interestingly, it can enforce prejudices, for instance in the boy-girl constellation, quite unintentionally. The impact of religious teaching and religious experience on conscience formation should be the subject matter of a special study phase.

3. In a stable, tradition-directed society, conscience is formed to submit to the social and moral status quo. This is perfectly normal. Morality is the self-evident behaviour. The fact that the Christian doctrine very often reinforces this submission to the status quo, is not quite so normal. The Gospel will be critical against any given morality as a way in which man tries to lead "the good life". But in fact religions, including Christianity, tend to be the guarantors of the given situation and they lend their religious sanctions as reinforcements to the social sanctions which threaten the transgressor of the moral tradition: public shame, public penitence, isolation, exclusion.

4. Tradition-directed morality is unable to cope with the decisions called for by today's and tomorrow's world. Its norms are particularistic, discerning between my family, my social group, my nation and "the others", who are not my responsibility. Its norms are essentially conservative, oriented towards traditional order rather than present change; and therefore incapable of seeing and accepting the basic trend of the time. Its norms are bourgeois; based on values like "work", "achievement", "property", "social prestige", "the family", "personality",

"Bildung" (2), and the like and therefore fundamentally undemocratic, irrelevant for mass culture. That does not mean that the history of morality is worthless for today's conscience formation. On the contrary, it is full of inspirations. But like the biblical tradition, it will need interpretation in the context of a changed world.

5. The problem of today's morality, therefore, is the fact that the conscience of the majority of mankind is still tradition-directed and consequently, dysfunctional in terms of the challenges and responsibilities of a world struggling for planetary unity, for the end of war, the end of want and man's complete liberation. This dysfunctionality will not be overcome by minor changes in moral patterns, by permissive reductions in moral demands but only by a radical change of direction. The direction of traditional morality is backward-looking, towards an established order of things and relationships which was "good" because it worked. The direction of the new morality will have to be forward-looking towards a coming order. It will have to be a future-oriented, anticipating morality. It will have to deal with things, persons and relationships not in the light of what they are, but in the light of what they will be. The notion of such an anticipating morality is not unrealistic. It was the way the early Christians lived. It was the way the early Marxists lived. It is the way parents treat their children. It is one of the hypotheses of this study that a future-oriented morality can be developed. There is only one reason for such a hypothesis: the world will not survive without it.

6. A future-oriented, anticipating conscience is a conscience directed by knowledge and reflection (reason). It was the strength of the old tradition-directed conscience that it was trained to react habitually to most of the situations of moral challenge. Hospitality, for instance, was a moral reflex in most of the old nomadic cultures and far beyond them. A future-oriented conscience will not be able to rely as much on these reflexes. In the age of reflection, i.e. analysis of experience, moral life will be much more strenuous than in former times. The moral is, at least for a transitional period, not the self-evident, but the result of gathering information, hard thinking, consultation with others and courageous decision. What does it mean, for instance, to be responsible for the moral education of a child, to be responsible for protecting it against the old sexual and social prejudices? What does it mean to live responsibly in a political system in which the opposition is part of the establishment and in which only political pressure may initiate change? How far do we go with political pressure? The moral is, in many cases, the result of a complicated analytical process. But this aspect should not be over-emphasized. There are habitual elements even in a future-oriented study. If one protects a child against social prejudice it will develop a natural readiness, a habitual readiness to accept every human being as a human being, whatever the colour of skin. If one exposes a child to the experience of the sick

and the old it will learn to react in pity, without reflection. It will be one of the problems of this study to discern the habitual and the reflective elements in modern morality, because of far-reaching educational consequences.

7. A future-oriented conscience will be a conscience instructed by hope. Only by hope can we see the positive elements in the ambiguous visions of tomorrow's world and try to aim at them, nourish our dreams on them, develop them by responsible decision today. Only by hope will we be able to overcome the bad frustration that we will experience in pursuing a fully human world. There must be an incentive for morality. In former times there was the reward for moral behaviour in social prestige and in a feeling of social security and rootedness. There has been the religious promise, connected with morality, if not by intention of the preacher, nevertheless in the understanding of the parish. Hope is the incentive of a future-oriented morality, the hope of fulfillment, the hope of success, the hope of man finally becoming man. Where does morality find its hope? Not in the historical process itself, it is ambiguous, endangered, full of forces of withdrawal and destruction. Where do we get the assurance that we shall overcome?

D. PROMISE

1. There are many sources of hope. Men find hope in religion. They find hope in political ideology. They find hope in scientific analysis. They find hope in love, comradeship, friendship. This study must not make Christianity the only relevant source of hope. That would not be true. And it would not serve the purpose of this study, namely: to work towards a morality which Christians could shape with all men of good will in order to work with them for a fully human world to come. So we respect every man full of hope. But it will be of extreme importance for this study to pursue the problem of hope, to find out how the hopes of men relate to each other, criticize each other and possibly gain from each other's insights. Hope is the material of the new morality.

2. Our hope is the promise of God, incarnate in Christ, liberating man for a life in anticipation of the coming Kingdom. This hope nourishes hopes for the overcoming of evil powers, the growing liberation of man and the humanization of the world in this time and through human endeavour. The hope from God and the hopes of men do not contradict each other, they belong together because man is called to anticipate the coming Kingdom now.

3. We believe in the world as God's ongoing creation, in which Christ is the ultimate creative event: man as man shall be. The penetration of the world with this pattern of manhood is the meaning of history. We are called to participate in this "Christification" of the world: by not submitting to the

"status quo" of injustice, suffering, want, sin and death and by anticipating the future of God's creation as Jesus did, in acts of justice, healing, liberation and in disbelief in death.

4. We believe in man as God's designated son, who is to be renewed and recreated in Christ's image: man in the likeness of God, the fully human man. To live together and encounter each other in anticipation of this eternal promise is the final meaning of society. We are called to participate in this "humanization" of society; not accepting the barriers between races, classes, nations, convictions but transcending them in love: not resigning in view of the sufferings of man, but fighting for the dignity, the liberty, the right of full human development of every neighbour.

5. We believe in the Church as God's own people, who are to witness to Christ and to assist him in his ongoing service to man and the world: the hopeful people. To be the lovers and the servants of creation is the final destination of the Christians, as they are members of the body of Christ. We are called to participate in the Church's commission: as it celebrates God's faithfulness in faithfulness to his creatures; as it denies obedience to all gods (powers, structures, taboos) other than God; as it pays the price of life, of peace, justice and freedom in sacrifice, upholding hope in a "status quo" of despair.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

E. CONSCIENTIOUS LIVING

Morality is dealing with the whole of life. A study on morality will therefore have to select carefully its specific subjects. An indication for this selection is given by Sections V and VI at Uppsala. There have been clear requests by the Assembly that these subjects should be further explored; but these sections represent a very one-sided selection of problems. A serious study of morality can hardly limit itself to the four subject matters of Section VI. Morality concerns persons and things and structures; the relation of a man to himself and to his neighbours and to the collectives of this world, to society as a whole; man as a receiving and as an acting being, his being determined by the past, by the present and by the future. Morality is ethics translated into everyday life. It is faith expressed in workaday behaviour. It is love disguised in "good manners". It relates to the whole of human life. A selection of problems in a study of morality will therefore ask where the "new" of the new morality appears in a particular way.

1. Crossing the frontiers

Traditional morality requested man to "keep his place". Man's place was determined by the order of the universe, by the religious order, by the social order, by the local order, by the balance of power in his own family. Man knew his place,

and to accept his place was the first moral obligation.

The new morality requests exactly the opposite. Man must venture out. He must not become the prisoner of "his place". He must learn more, experience more, achieve more, become more than he is by birth. Barriers that would have abhorred his forefather; he must cross. Thoughts that would not have occurred to his forefather; he must think. Stability was asked from his forefather: mobility is asked from him. Where his forefather was restricted to a place; he is called into the open horizon of the whole world. There is no exaggeration in these contrasts. In a stable world it was a question of survival to be stable. In a world of change it is a question of survival to be mobile, to be ready to cross the frontiers.

There are many moral attitudes to be discussed in the general context of "mobility". There is first of all the problem of receptivity for new experiences. Strangely enough - at least in the Western culture - this receptivity, which is characteristic for the child and the young adult, loses itself with adulthood. The reasons for that loss should be explored. They are ruinous with respect to a world of change. There is, further, the problem of extended education and of permanent education. The old notion of "keeping one's place" is still one of the reasons why education of young people is interrupted. There are other, more material reasons of course; but the basic notion that education is connected with particular ranks in society has roots in moral tradition. Permanent education becomes of increased importance even in the area of individual ethics. Marriages, for instance, extend over many decades nowadays. The real problem of marriage is growing old together. What is the content of marriage during the last thirty or forty years, after the children have gone? This problem is educational, as the whole problem of extended old age is educational, and is in fact one of the most serious problems of education in our modern society. But how to create the idea that learning is man's virtue? Social mobility is another crucial problem of conscience. "Keep to your own kind" has been a virtue, it is a vice in modern society. It is a vice to isolate minorities. It is a vice to accept class separation. It is a vice to foster tribal, national, or racial prejudice. It is a vice to exclude the sick and the misfits from communal life. It is a vice to denounce mixed education and mixed marriages for religious or racist reasons. It is a vice to think in terms of the cold war, in terms of fixed friend-foe categories. It is a twofold vice to pass on such prejudices to one's children. Parochialism is criminal. It may have been a necessary moral attitude in former times because it strengthened social cohesion. It is a crime today because mankind will either live together or perish.

But, of course, there are real conflicts, deadly conflicts which keep us apart, which keep races and classes and nations and ideologies and religions apart in this modern world. Thus mobility finally means reconciliation. It means to be ready to think the other's thoughts, to suffer the other's fears, to become intimate with the other's hopes. It means to accept the

...../

other's presuppositions not in order to change identity but to become ready for dialogue. Dialogue is the art of reconciliation. It is the art of struggling with the other without annihilating him. One does not want to convert the other in dialogue. One does not want to destroy his position. One wants him to become truer to his position. One wants to make one's position more sound by learning from him. In that way we will lose the fear of each other. We will learn to know each other and we will find areas of common interest, of common concern. That is sufficient for the beginning of a common history.

2. Creating Liberty

Traditional morality was aware of the problem of individual and social freedom. On the whole however, the solution was resignative. By accepting one's "place" one found relative freedom within the duties and the creative possibilities of one's "place". One could always transcend one's limitations in religion. Freedom, in the old morality, was a grant of order.

In the new morality the relationship will be the reverse: "order" will depend on freedom. That may sound like an empty ideal. But in a world of constant and increasing rebellion of minorities - youth, students, racial and ethnic groups, intellectuals etc. - against the paternal structures of society, against "order", it is but an attempt to grasp a new reality. This new reality is the breakdown of the idea of order. In the idea of order there is still a sacrosanct element, a notion of "natural" if not God-given authority: the authority of the statesman; the state official; the military officer; the father; the teacher; the entrepreneur. This age-old concept of a hierarchy of unquestionable social authorities is dissolving, secularization is destroying it. The result will be the two notions of "organization" instead of "order"; and of "functional authority" instead of "institutional authority".

The breakdown of institutional authority, even in the family, is however, a very ambiguous thing. After all, authority is a positive phenomenon, as long as it is not perverting tyranny. Authority means guidance, protection, clarity of rules, security. It means being cared for. Authority is always a call to grow, to develop, to identify, to serve. If this basic reality of social life is really breaking down in our time what is going to take its place: protecting; guiding; caring; calling to grow? The answer must be: freedom. The ability to protect oneself, to care for oneself, to find guidance, to develop oneself. The ability to discern authority - for there still is authority - to accept it if it is authentic and to reject it if it leads astray. The alternance to question 'leadership' - a new disguise of authority - where it exploits human dedication. The critical use of social structures with the basic conviction that man is not made for structures, but structures are made for man. This sentence of Jesus, which was the original signal of secularization, is still valid, is still capable of making men free to see and critically accept society as a system of functions and organizations, without any mythical dignity of its own.

The background of our description of the moral relevance of basic human relationships is therefore creating liberty. Human beings live together to liberate each other, to be one another's freedom. It is easy to describe marriage in such terms. It is much more difficult to interpret the relationship between parents and children along such lines. To make the creation of liberty a consistent moral theory of social living together will need serious study; but it has to be tried. Creating liberty is a condition of survival.

The present conflict between the young and the old is not understood fully and correctly as a "generations' conflict". The young ones rebel and riot, not against the old but against the institutions of an old world with which the old generation is identified. They sense that with these institutions, the problems of a coming world cannot be solved. Even apart from that "young" and "old" signify two entirely different and - in the final analysis - irreconcilable ways of experiencing the world: "young" means to experience the world as the realm of possibilities; "old" means experiencing the world as the realm of reality, which basically cannot be altered. Where this basic difference of experience is acknowledged there is a possibility of dialogue, of mutual questioning, encouragement and criticism which helps the liberation of both. The idea of marriage as the exclusive, life-long unconditioned covenant of love between one man and one woman is indispensable for the Christian Church. But it is equally impossible to make this idea - which really signifies a divine vocation - the basis of general morality in a pluralistic society. Christian Churches will have to re-think their ideas in at least four points of sexual ethics: experiments of love/premarital experiences? the role of women in marriage/married women in professional life; the problem of divorce/differentiation between love marriages and family marriages (Mead); the problems of long-term marriages in the light of increasing life expectation.

The old emancipation movement of women has come to an end without reaching its aim: the establishment of the full dignity and equality of women. The "feminine mystique" which is in line with the consumers ideals in modern society, has taken over. A new liberation movement of women is necessary as an international movement of education and pressure.

Another problem is the relationship between the privileged and the non-privileged: the basic moral problem, for instance in the relationship between developing and developed nations, is the question how aid can be given without domination. The formula "help for self-help", is correct, but can still be used in a repressive way. There are only two insights which lead to aid as a process of liberation: the realization that the non-privileged have the r i g h t of aid, that charity does not come into the picture at all, because helping the non-privileged is a question of guilt, of debts, of economic, political and moral obligations. Further, there is the Christian insight that love is mutual enrichment, that no-

body creates liberty without being liberated himself. Only when there is serious acceptance of these motivations for aid and love in international and local situations, the non-privileged is in a position where he himself can decide whether and where and how he wants help.

To live conscientiously means to participate in the worldwide attempt to change the paternal structures of our societies into fraternal, more fully democratic structures. The paternal structures of our time are not the structures of traditional society, but have developed as a means of repression of the processes of emancipation during the last centuries. They are reactionary structures, which is why the struggle against these structures normally has a militant undertone. Life in authoritarian structures, for instance education in authoritarian schools and universities, leads to a moral inability to cope with the problems of tomorrow's world. It suppresses the sense of freedom, independence, readiness for change and subjects to the forces of manipulation. It promises and commands discipline and order where only creative unrest and the experiment of independent life can lead on.

3. Celebrating Life

In the traditional way of living together celebration had a central place, celebration of birth and death, of sowing and harvesting, of spring and fall. The Christian liturgy was the celebration of God and all his gifts, of the word and the world and life and bread and joy. And it was at the same time, the continuous self-celebration of a local community and its belonging together.

The notion of celebration has been almost forgotten in our contemporary moral culture. The old custom of celebrating nature, work and man's survival have become obsolete in this technical world. In the Christian liturgy, God and this technical world have fallen apart, and worship is no longer relaxed celebration, it has become an intellectual, physical and spiritual effort. There is no place for the self-celebration of a community any more because we have lost this kind of small integrated community.

Life needs celebrating, it is precious and it has a glorious future. Only by celebration will it become aware of this future and committed to this future. The world must be celebrated as a process of evolution towards fulfillment. Only by celebration will we learn to see the world in the light of this fulfillment and, therefore, of its possibilities and promises. Mankind is the community in which we live today. It must be celebrated. Only by celebration will mankind cease to be an abstraction and become a living and promising reality. Celebration is the way in which man encounters the mystery, the fullness and the promise of existence. Celebration will be the way in which we begin to live with the world to come, in its hidden richness.

There are elements of possible celebration in modern life. There is the notion of leisure. In a world characterized by a puritanical, concept of work, duty and achievement, the idea of leisure will have to be freed from the false contrast "work and leisure". Leisure is more than non-work, more than spare time and its activities. Leisure is not doing things; but keeping quiet while things do something to me. Leisure can be reading - that depends on the books. Leisure can be travelling - that depends on the way you travel. Leisure can certainly be looking at television - depending on the programme and on the way it is allowed to "sink in". Leisure is a moral problem. Man is living in a particular rhythm of life. This rhythm requests receptivity before activity. To learn how to receive and to be ready to receive is a matter of human responsibility, of conscience.

By exploring leisure, its rules, its possibilities, its expressions in our time, the study may find a new approach towards the problem of work. It may be able to free the concept of work from its quasi-religious over-estimation and find ways of persuading people that "work" is not the only possible expression of their creativity, that there are other ways, more valuable ways, like voluntary service to people and to institutions. "Work" of course, will always be an element of the human destiny, in some way or other; but it is not the field of final justification and fulfillment. It is not the field where man is weighed and his worth judged. To establish this insight is of extreme importance as we approach a social situation in which the distance between the unqualified and the highly qualified, the superficially trained and the specialists will become greater and greater.

Parts of this world are affluent. People are offered a wealth of goods. They are supplied with numerous means of celebration, with means of entertaining people, with means of the most exciting physical exercise, with products of culture, even with means of being beautiful and making other people beautiful. There is, however, a basic difference between the consuming and the celebrating man. The consuming man is taking his share. The celebrating man is expressing joy and sharing joy. Consuming separate people, makes them competitors. Celebrating draws people in, makes them brothers. There has always been a moral culture of dealing with things, with goods. To develop such a culture in an affluent society vis-à-vis a world full of hunger, is of extreme importance. It will include a new balance of celebration and asceticism.

It will be necessary, in this context, to deal with worship. Worship, of course, is more than an element of morality; it is a moral problem too, in several ways. It is an effective means of moral education, for children and for adults: the history of religious glorification of nationalism for instance, remains still to be written. It is, in spite of what has been said, the most authentic expression of celebration we have. How could one better celebrate the world than in the presence of its Creator? One would, of course, have to reconsider the problem of worship in the light of what celebration means for modern man.

The most important factor for considering worship in a study on morality, has already been mentioned. Future-oriented conscience lives on hope. Our hope is Jesus Christ. We are reassured of our hope in the liturgy of our Christian community. Although worship is a transmoral reality, it gives birth to morality. If worship is seen in terms of the moral needs of men, it is an interesting and highly valuable perspective. Worship will then, for instance, be seen again in its polemic, its exorcistic character, a traditional element of the liturgy which we have almost lost. The confession of God and the abrogation of all godlike powers, the joy about creation and the wrath about everything that destroys it, the celebration of life and the fight against death are inseparably linked, in life and in worship.

4. Paying the price

Modern society is in a peculiar dilemma. It cannot function without a high proportion of people who give service without reward or at least service beyond reward. Not even an industrial plant will function in a satisfying way without numerous people who are ready to invest more time, more strength, more interest, more skill, more love than they get paid for. How much more true is this for the whole area of social services, for science and the arts, for education and the health service. The dilemma of modern society is that it cannot produce these people ready for service, on whom it lives. Its inherent moral is strictly the balance between effort and pay, achievement and reward. In fact, this society is living on a heritage of pre-industrial motivations for service, on moral traditions like that of "the doctor" and "the nurse" and "the state official" and "the missionary". These were social functions whose particular honour was to serve beyond reward even to the degree of exploitation. There are similar traditions for instance in the workers' movement with Communist morality as the highest expression; in the role of the woman in almost all cultures; in emancipation and religious renewal movements. But all these movements and traditions are historical. There are in East and West, in North and South attempts to revive the old traditions of service, there are strong incentives in the ideas of anti-colonialism, communism, nation-building and in the signal of revolution. But, on the whole and in the long run, these moral appeals do not seem to be too successful.

There was a religious element in the old idea of service. The idea of "God's reward", which cannot be secularized and rationalized. Not even religious people can establish a balance of service and eternal reward in the way of their forefathers. But a society cannot live without service!

Is there the possibility of a rational argumentation for service? Is there a way to persuade people that it is reasonable to ask them for service beyond reward? Life costs life; freedom costs freedom. I can either be free by making my

neighbour unfree, or I can help him to be free by being at his service. It is "mors tua vita mea" or it is "mors mea vita tua". And this alternative at the same time signifies the difference of war and peace, freedom and slavery, happiness and misery, catastrophe and open future. Every child has lived on the life of his mother. Every husband lives on the health and the beauty of his wife. We know how we need service, voluntary service of other people. It is necessary that we learn to pay the price of life ourselves. There is, after all, a translation for the "eternal reward" of our forefathers. The translation is future, development, humanization, liberation. Without people paying the price there will be none of it.

With the moral signal "paying the price" it will be possible to investigate quite a number of problems of social service and social ethics. For instance the problem how to counteract manipulation is highly important. The same is true of the question how to organize political pressure. Without an investment of service beyond reward these processes will not happen. The most important issues in this context are of course the issues of civil disobedience and revolution. Under what circumstances am I requested to pay the price of revolution - and to force others to pay the same price?

5. Conscience Formation

The study will only serve its purpose if it results in a pedagogy of conscience formation or if it spreads information about such a pedagogy should it exist in a relevant way. Evidently, as with other problems of education, there are three main issues: goals, content and methodology. In this paper there are some remarks on goals and content, remarks which are meant to encourage and, if possible, to initiate serious study. The real problem of this study, however, cannot even be hinted at by this paper. It is the problem of methodology, of the educational process in which conscience-formation and re-education of conscience happens. It is this double problem that must be dealt with because the formation of a future-oriented conscience will certainly not happen if the "educators of conscience" live and teach with a tradition-directed morality without at least reflecting it.

Thus a study on morality in its educational part will have to explore pedagogical relationships. What happens between parents and children in terms of moral education? What are the important moral influences? How is a child "broken in" to the moral system of society? What is the role of the father? What is the role of the mother? What is the role of the wider family? What happens in school? In what ways is the work of the teacher morally relevant? What does it mean that the child by going to school is for the first time part of two systems of authority? Many of these questions have been carefully explored, but have they been studied in terms of morality, in terms of the need to develop a new moral system?

Then there will be a necessary second phase dealing with adult education. The work of lay academies and adult education agencies has been issue-oriented and rightly so. But it will be necessary to think of participants of these courses as educators, forming the conscience, determining the morality of children, young people and their peers.

And finally there will be the problem of children and young people themselves. Whatever the relevance of the arguments in this paper, there is a change of climate in our encounter with children and young people. They indeed question our authority, in a more and more radical way. And by questioning our authority they challenge us as teachers of the ways of life. They are not convinced that we can teach life as they will have to live. In other words, the problem of morality as the art of responsible life is not thrown up artificially in this paper. This problem forces itself upon us in our encounter with our children.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro